PLANET OF THE SPIDERS

DOCTOR WHO

AN ADVENTURE IN SPACE & TIME

~PHIL '87

code: 222 ~ Robert Sloman

Suspicious of the activities of a group of people at a Buddhist meditation centre where he is staying, Mike Yates invites Sarah Jane Smith to visit and report back to UNIT.

The Doctor and the Brigadier, meanwhile, are watching a variety show at a theatre. The Time Lord is eager to meet one of the acts: Professor Herbert Clegg, a mind reader.

Lupton, the leader of the meditation group, has learned of Sarah's forthcoming visit. He calls his group together and, in the cellar of the house, they gather around a mandala, chanting. On the way to the centre, Mike is telling Sarah of his suspicions. She is sceptical - until the car is forced off the road by a tractor, which then vanishes!

Clegg visits UNIT, and is shocked when the Doctor realises he is a true clairvoyant. Though he loathes the power he possesses, he agrees to take part in some experiments. He has undergone several tests when Benton arrives with a package. The Doctor opens it and finds that it contains the blue crystal he gave Jo as a wedding present. A letter from Jo explains that the native porters in the Amazonian jungle believed it to be 'bad magic', so she had to send it back. While the Doctor is reading the letter, Clegg stares into the crystal. Suddenly, a powerful wind erupts, the room shakes and objects are hurled about.

Sarah and Mike are found searching the centre by Tommy, a backward young man. Sarah distracts him by giving him her broach as a present, then she and Mike sneak into the cellar, where they see Lupton's group chanting around the mandala. Suddenly, a huge spider appears on the mat!

The Doctor manages to take the crystal from Clegg, and the commotion subsides. However, Clegg collapses, dead.

In the cellar, the spider jumps on Lupton's back and vanishes. A change overtakes the man and he orders the others to leave. Sarah slips out and heads back to UNIT.

The Doctor believes Clegg died of a heart attack caused by what he saw in the crystal. He activates a machine which was recording the man's thoughts, and it displays images of spiders.

Meanwhile, in his room at the meditation centre, Lupton is told by the spider that it has been sent to Earth to seek out a blue crystal.

While Sarah tells the Doctor what she saw, Lupton arrives at UNIT HQ and steals the crystal. After a long chase, the Doctor eventually corners him on a speed boat. Suddenly, however, the man vanishes; by using the spiders' mental energy, he has transported himself back to the meditation centre. The Doctor and Sarah go to the centre and tell the monk in charge, Cho-je, what Lupton has done. He does not believe them, however, as he saw Lupton in the centre at about the time they claim he was on the river. Meanwhile, the magpie-natured Tommy takes the crystal from Lupton's room, but Lupton has no time to retrieve it; he is to be transported to Metebelis Three by order of the Queen Spider. Entering the cellar, he steps onto the mandala and vanishes. When Sarah runs into the room after him, she too is transported.

On Metebelis, Sarah is sentenced to death by the human inhabitants, but then reprieved by their young leader, Arak. They hide in a dwelling hut as the Queen arrives, ordering the villagers to surrender the 'traitor' Arak. Arak's father, Sabor, offers himself instead, claiming he has helped his son to get away. Sarah is also caught, but the Doctor arrives in the TARDIS and demands her release. He is felled by a bolt of energy from a guard's weapon and left for dead, but Sarah escapes during the fight. Thwarted, the Queen returns to her base, where she finds Lupton and his spider. Bluffing, they refuse to hand over the crystal, claiming that they have it hidden on Earth.

The Doctor weakly tells Sarah there is a device on the TARDIS which will cure him. She goes to fetch it, but is caught and taken to the spiders' lair. Arak then collects the Doctor's device and, recovering, the Time Lord organises the villagers in a revolt against the spiders; he, however, is captured and imprisoned with Sarah and Sabor.

The villagers attack the spiders' base and, in the confusion, the Doctor and Sarah escape and return to Earth, unaware that the spiders are also on their way there. The creatures take over Lupton's group, who stun Yates and Cho-je as the TARDIS arrives. Tommy, however, has looked into the crystal and is no longer retarded. Immune to attack, he takes the travellers to the Abbot, K'anpo Rimpoche. The Doctor recognises K'anpo as his former Time Lord mentor and accepts his advice that he must return the crystal to Metebelis Three. Sarah tries to stop him, and the Abbot realises she has been taken over by the Queen Spider. The Doctor turns the crystal on her, killing the Queen. Leaving the injured Yates in K'anpo's care, he then returns to the TARDIS. In saving Yates' life, the Abbot dies, only to be reborn as Cho-je - his future self.

The Doctor believes the villagers' revolt has succeeded - until they take him to the spiders. When he declares that he intends giving the crystal to the planet's ruler - the 'Great One' - Lupton tries to take it from him, but is killed by the spiders. The Time Lord then goes to a cavern where the Great One - a gigantic spider - tells him she needs his crystal to complete a web which will expand her mental energies to infinity. She takes the stone and inserts it into the lattice, but the growing power proves too much for her, and she is destroyed. Mentally linked to her, the other spiders also die. The Doctor makes his escape in the TARDIS, and eventually arrives back at UNIT. He collapses, ravaged by the radiation of the Great One's cave, but K'anpo suddenly appears and helps his former pupil to regenerate. Sarah and the Brigadier watch in fascination as the Doctor's features blur and change...

(74-04)

MR. -18-

(149 on 3) /S2 4J 2J/

150. 2 J — 9. INT. K'ANPO'S ROOM. DAY.
2S S.RAH/DOC

/L SWINGER OUT/ (THE DOCTOR IS BENDING OVER S.RAH WHO IS JUST COMING ROUND)

SARAH: I'm....I'm sorry, Doctor.

(THE DOCTOR HELPS HER TO HER FEET)

DOCTOR WHO: You did very well. You should be proud of yourself.

(HE LEADS HER TO A CHAIR)

151. 5 J — SARAH: But to let that....that creature take me over. I mean, I actually volunteered....
MCU K'ANPO

K'ANPO: We are all apt to surrender ourselves to domination,

(HE LOOKS AT THE DOCTOR)

152. 4 J — Even the strongest of us.
2S S.RAH/DOC

Take Dr R

DOCTOR WHO: You mean. me?

K'ANPO: Not all spiders sit on the back.

-18-

(2 next) (40)

....

-19-

(152 on 4)

(THE DOCTOR GIVES HIM A SUDDEN LOOK OF RECOGNITION)

153. 2 J — SARAH: I don't understand. Are you saying that they've taken over the Doctor too?
CMS S.RAH

154. 4 J
CMS DOCTOR

(THE DOCTOR SMILES RUEFULLY. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD)

DOCTOR WHO: No, my dear. He was talking about my pride, my vanity, my greed.

SARAH: Greed? You?

DOCTOR WHO: My greed for knowledge, for experience. He's saying that all this trouble is basically my fault. If I hadn't taken that Crystal in the first place....

(HE TURNS TO THE ABBOT)

155. 2 J — on turn
CU DOCTOR

DOCTOR WHO: I know who you are, now.

(K'ANPO SMILES)

156. 5 J — K'ANPO: You were always a little slow on the uptake, my boy.
CMS K'ANPO

(HE HOLDSOUT HIS HAND. THE DOCTOR CLASPS IT AND LOOKS INTO THE ABBOT'S EYES WITH GREAT AFFECTION)

157. 2 J — DOCTOR WHO: It's been a long time.
2S DOC/K'ANPO

-19-

(5 next) (41)

-20-

(157 on 2)

(SARAH IS BEWILDERED)

SARAH: You two know each other?

158. 5 J — on turn — DOCTOR WHO: He was my teacher, my... my guru, if you like. In another time. Another place.
MCU DOC

159. 4 J
MCU K'ANPO

160. 2 J — K'ANPO: Another life.
CMS S.RAH

SARAH: Don't tell me you're a Time Lord, too?

161. 4 J
A/B

(K'ANPO NODS)

K'ANPO: But the discipline they serve was not for me.

DOCTOR WHO: Nor me.

(K'ANPO TWINKLES)

K'ANPO: I would have chosen your alternative. To...er...'borrow' a TARDIS was...ah...a little naughty, to say the least.

162. 2 J
MCU S.RAH

DOCTOR WHO: I had to get away. I hadn't your powers.

163. 5 J
2S DOC/K'ANPO
FLY K'ANPO

K'ANPO: Indeed. I regenerated and came to Earth.

SARAH: (WEARILY) Regenerated?

DOCTOR WHO: When a Time Lord's body wears out, it can regenerate, become new.

-20-

(2 next) (42)

Ep.6.

-21-

(163 on 5)

K'ANPO: That's why we can live such a long time.

164. 2 J
MCU S.RAH

SARAH: I see. And where does Cho-je come into all this. Is he a Time Lord?

165. 5 J
MCU K'ANPO

(K'ANPO GIGLES)

K'ANPO: In a sense. In another sense, he doesn't exist.

166. 2 J — SARAH: You've lost me.
MCU DOCTOR

DOCTOR WHO: Me too, I'm afraid.

167. 5 J
CU K'ANPO

K'ANPO: Cho-Je is a projection of my own self.

(K'ANPO SMILES)

CUT TO BLACK

ONTO SCENE 11

~~EDIT IN: 10. INT. MONASTERY COURT~~

-21-

(1 next) (43)

Ep.6

REPRODUCED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH BBCtv

STORY REVIEW

Geraint Jones

When the news broke early in 1974 that Jon Pertwee was to relinquish his role as the Doctor, it became inevitable that 'Planet of the Spiders', his last adventure, would be viewed with added expectation and excitement. Unfortunately, expectations are often rewarded with disappointments.

Far from ending the Pertwee era on a high note, this final serial sadly continued the general trend of the eleventh season, in which one story after another had failed to generate any of my usual enthusiasm for my favourite programme. A hated historical setting, puppet dinosaurs, lack-lustre Daleks and an over-long political drama had been a curious succession of anti-climaxes. This lack of impact was not helped for me personally by the fact that BBC Wales had decided to transmit the episodes firstly in a midweek slot, and then at various times on a Sunday. To lift the series from a slot which I had regarded as sacrosanct bordered on the sacrilegious! By this act of scheduling alone, a little of the integral appeal of 'Doctor Who' had been lost for me.

But television drama does not stand or fall by scheduling alone. What of the story? Robert Sloman had already proved his script-writing skills in earlier seasons with well structured plots and rounded characters. He had also demonstrated his ability to keep up the drama over the length of a six-part serial. Not so this time. Good as the basic story idea undoubtedly was, the plot woven around it was so thin that it could never have been successfully sustained over six whole episodes. After all, the main thread was crystallised in a single speech by the Great One in the final episode:

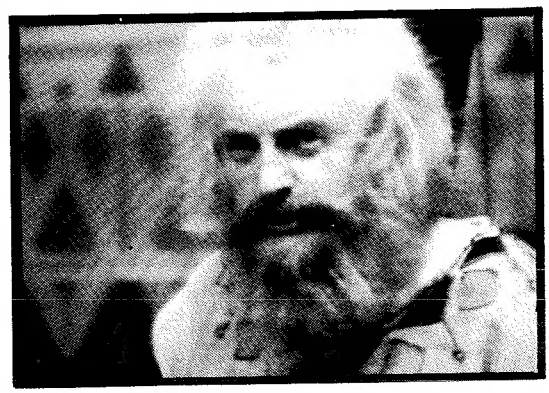
"You see this web of crystal above my head? It reproduces the pattern of my brain. One perfect crystal and it will be complete. That is the perfect crystal I need!"

The previous five episodes were a means by which to reach this ultimate end, and they did so in a very roundabout way! There was far too much padding and repetitive to-ing and fro-ing to make the script and production a tight one; had the story been told in four episodes, it would undoubtedly have ensured a far more satisfying swansong for Pertwee's Doctor. Good indications of the quality of drama in an episodic serial are surely the episode cliffhangers. Apart from the regeneration scene which closed the story - and the era - not one of the others in 'Planet of the Spiders' was particularly exciting or audience-grabbing. Rather than thundering towards a climax, every episode gave the impression that it was slowly but surely running out of steam.

Of course, in reality, it was the production team who were running out of steam. After four excellent years in which we had seen production values reach great heights, a reversal had to happen at some stage. As all of the main team slowly admitted, it was time for new blood - regeneration all round. Everyone from writer to producer had given the series all they could.

That said, however, there were still many elements in 'Planet of the Spiders' to enjoy and praise. I particularly liked the care taken to profit from the series' own continuity. Mike Yates was an integral part of the developing drama, and this plot line followed naturally from previous adventures, namely 'The Green Death' (Serial "TTT") and 'Invasion of the Dinosaurs' (Serial "WWW"). The blue crystal and Metebelis Three were also familiar to those who followed the series closely but, at the same time, not essential information to over-complicate things for the more casual viewer. The greatest continuity joy was undoubtedly the Abbot K'anpo, who, it transpired, was once the Doctor's mentor. And a joy also to realise that there <u>are</u> other benevolent Time Lords in the Universe! George Cormak portrayed the Abbot with a gentle and endearing performance, giving the Doctor's unavoidable fate an added edge and particular poignancy.

The meditation centre setting and religious undertones also gave the story a very fresh element. At last here was an Earth-bound Pertwee story without a massive scientific establishment at its centre, and little military hardware either, even if UNIT played a role in the background. This religious element was, however, very much understated, and consequently came across at times as being rather superficial. One can hardly blame the production team for not



wanting to delve too deeply into the concepts around which the story was based, as it would unavoidably have slowed down the drama and could well have seemed out of place. The end result however was that in 'Planet of the Spiders', 'Doctor Who' tended to do for religion what it had often done for science - reduce it to the level of insignificant mumbo jumbo. To the uninitiated, 'Om Mani Padme Hum' has no more meaning or significance than 'Reverse the Polarity of the Neutron Flow' - both sound rhythmic and catchy, but that's about all!

One thing that can often make or break a 'Doctor Who' story is the quality of its 'monsters'. In this case, the monsters in question were the giant spiders of the title. I think the special effects team did a wonderful job in making such large props mobile and threatening - no mean feat! Luckily, these little household invaders have never given me the willies personally, and I have delighted in washing a few of the uninvited eight legs down the plug hole. But I can imagine that those who are repulsed by 'creepy crawlies' must have been scared witless over the six weeks of this story's transmission! The Great One was a triumph of special effects, especially when the Doctor had to stand in front of the towering monstrosity. Who could blame him for being frightened? I do feel, though, that a hint of its enormous size could have given in episode five, to provide a much needed added edge: perhaps a quick glimpse of one of its legs, and a shot of the Doctor from its point of view etc. As it stood, the one sequence we had of the Doctor in the cave of crystals in the penultimate episode seemed to appear from nowhere, was very disjointed, and hardly raised even a twinge of fear. But full marks for the climactic encounter. Just imagine how it would have worked on a big screen in a cinema! A truly magical 'Doctor Who' experience.

What I found very difficult indeed to accept at first was that these overgrown spiders could speak English! It would surely have been far scarier if they had been silent and had used humans to project their thoughts into voice. The voices themselves were however very alien, and it seemed strangely effective to use only female voices for such awe-inspiring creatures.

The other villain of the piece, Lupton, was portrayed very convincingly by John Dearth. Not an all time great 'Who' villain, but Dearth restrained himself nicely from acting the part of yet another megalomaniac 'over the top'. Terrible taste in clothes though!

Most of the other characters were merely plot devices with little or no life of their own. This was especially true of the human inhabitants of Metebelis Three, whose raison d'etre seemed to be simply to stage a revolt against the eight legs in order to stretch out the story for another couple of episodes. The make-up on the old man was, incidentally, very amateurish.

Lupton's 'associates' in the meditation centre were little better, and the one exception to this long line of weak characters was of course Tommy. There is nothing more effective than an underdog in drama, and Tommy must surely rank as one of the most endearing of the incidental 'Doctor Who' characters to date. I always felt for the poor lad whenever Lupton or any of the others picked on him, and of course cheered with everybody else at home when he became so-called 'normal'. A truly effective means of demonstrating the crystal's immense power and a nice character development.

Apart from the spiders and the humans, the centre of attention in this milestone adventure was, of course, the star of the show, Jon Pertwee. I have to admit that I had seem him better. I felt that there was very little enthusiasm in his performance for the most part of the story, apart from the exciting chase sequence in episode two. It seemed that not only was the production team tired, but also the lead actor.

The very last sequence however left me with a very large lump in my throat! Five years earlier, when the Doctor I 'grew up with' finally bowed out, I had thought that the magical mystery tour every Saturday night was well and truly over. But the Pertwee era managed to keep me still glued to the set, marvelling at the imaginative new stories, glossier production and dynamic Doctor. Life was still wonderful! After five years however, it felt inevitable that a change had to happen. As the Brigadier uttered those immortal words, 'Here we go again', I knew that it was not a moment too soon.

SPACE & TIME

Editor.....Stephen James Walker
Design Editor.....Deanne Holding
Art Editor.....Phil Bevan
Cover and Synopsis Page Art.....Phil Bevan
Contributors this issue.....J. Jeremy Bentham
John Bowman
Mark Frankcombe
Gary Hopkins
Geraint Jones
Barry Letts
Justin Richards
Distribution.....'CyberMark Services'
'Doctor Who' copyright.....BBCtv
Editorial address.....9, Tall Elms Close, Bromley
Kent, BR2 0TT

SPACE & TIME

PRODUCTION OFFICE

Jeremy Bentham

Although credited solely to Robert Sloman, the script for 'Planet of the Spiders' was in fact written jointly by Sloman and Producer Barry Letts, working together as they had done previously on 'The Daemons' (Serial "JJJ"), 'The Time Monster' (Serial "OOO") and 'The Green Death' (Serial "TTT"). The roots of the story in fact stretched back to one of those earlier collaborations, 'The Time Monster', in which the two writers had touched upon the question of the Doctor's motivation for leaving Gallifrey, and the relationship that had existed between him and his 'guru', the hermit on the hillside. In considering the Doctor's character, they had realised that there was a great flaw in his make-up; a flaw which Barry Letts in particular wanted to see corrected.

The flaw in question was the Doctor's thirst for knowledge - a characteristic common to all three of his incarnations to date. As a follower of Buddhism, Letts found this very unsatisfactory, as he explains: "There is nothing wrong with the acquisition of knowledge. Indeed it is the result of any being who travels along a path of meditation towards Enlightenment. But what is wrong is having a greed for that knowledge, because greed supposes a pre-occupation with self, the Ego. We know from the beginning that the Doctor stole a TARDIS to satisfy his greed for knowledge, and even if you look at 'The Green Death' you are still seeing him steal one of the blue crystals for precisely the same reason." Letts therefore determined to make 'Planet of the Spiders', in effect, a Buddhist parable showing the Doctor coming to terms with his greed and fear and being transformed into 'a new man' (see pages "74-08" - "74-10").

Originally the catalyst for the Doctor's act of self-purification was to have been the Master. Letts and Script Editor Terrance Dicks had already decided, a season earlier, to write the character out of the show, and one idea to have emerged from their many hours of discussions was a suggestion that the Master and the Doctor were in fact brothers; in effect two opposing faces of the same coin. And just as Letts' aim was to have the Doctor confronting and overcoming his failings, so the Master's final deed, before a spectacular demise, would have been an act of redemption: giving his life to save that of the Doctor.

Events of course changed all this with the sudden and tragic death of Roger Delgado in 1973. By the time the story came to be written, a year later and with the added input of Robert Sloman, its structure had greatly altered. The character of Lupton had facets of the Master's desire for global domination, but in essence he was an original creation from the pens of Sloman and Letts.

Another key element in the story was the Metebelis crystal. References to "Metebelis Three, the famous Blue Planet of the Acteon Group" had been made as long ago as in the script for 'The Three Doctors' (Serial "RRR"). Although that piece of dialogue had been cut from the transmitted serial for reasons of time, the name nevertheless stuck, and for the next two seasons the Doctor's plans to visit the planet became almost a running gag in the series. So it seemed a convenient peg upon which to hang the 'Planet of the Spiders' plot, that the audience would at last get a lengthy visit to this fabled world, only to discover that it wasn't too much to write home about after al...

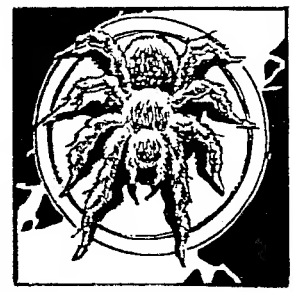
Exercising his contractual option, Barry Letts chose to direct this story himself, even though it meant adding greatly to his personal workload. Unlike his earlier 'Doctor Who' directing assignments, 'Planet of the Spiders' was not a beginning-of-season or end-of-season serial, although it would be transmitted as such: there was in fact still one more to go in the current production block.

One of Letts' motives for taking on this task was that it enabled him to fulfil a number of promises which he had made. In December 1973, Jon Pertwee had taken him to the Earl's Court Boat Show in Olympia, London, specifically to point out a new type of one-man hovercraft, and to suggest its inclusion in 'Doctor Who'. There and then Letts had agreed. Similarly, out of his own pocket, Pertwee had commissioned the 'Whomobile' which, by Spring 1974, was fully completed with the addition of its hinged wind-screen/hood. Again, Letts had promised him a slot in the programme to show off his machine; but with time fast running out, there was only one possible serial left in which to meet all these obligations: 'Planet of the Spiders'. And so, by way of a parting gift to the show's outgoing star, Letts deliberately crafted episode two to include as much motorised hardware as a six-part budget would allow - including the one-man hovercraft and the Whomobile. Another gesture Letts wanted to make was a 'thank you' to the two stuntmen who had done most to enhance the many action set pieces that had become almost a hallmark of the Pertwee era - Terry Walsh and Stuart Fell. Allocating them a sizeable sum of money, he asked Walsh to design as many stunt sequences as he could to 'beef up' the Doctor/Lupton chase; a brief which resulted in the addition of the autogyro and power boat scenes, most of which would be directed by Terry Walsh himself in his technical capacity as Stunt Co-ordinator. And finally, in recognition of the great contribution which Roger Delgado had made to the Pertwee 'Doctor Who's, Letts asked the actor's widow, Kismet, to take a role in the story, as the voice of the Queen Spider.

'Planet of the Spiders' was a landmark serial for 'Doctor Who' in more ways than one, as apart from Jon Pertwee's exit, it also saw another important departure, this time from the Production Office. After six years of working on the show, first as Assistant Script Editor and then, from the end of the Troughton era, as Script Editor proper, Terrance Dicks finally called it a day, completing his handover to the one-time aspiring new writer he had helped to coach, Robert Holmes.

ALL THINGS MUST PASS

John Bowman



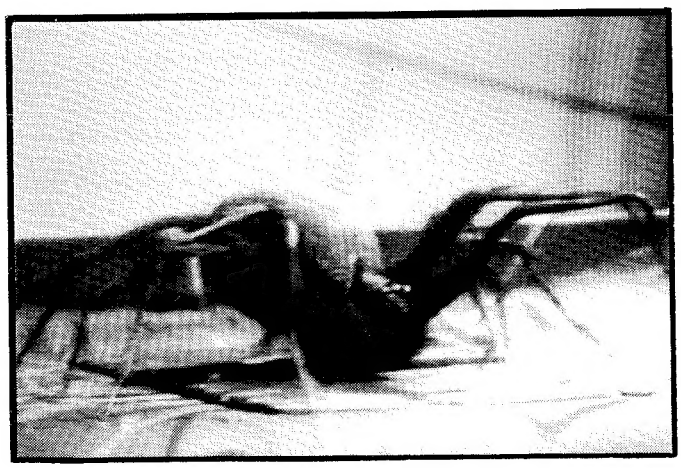
Serendipity - the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident. Coined in 1754 by Horace Walpole (son of politician Robert), the term crept its way into the 'Doctor Who' fan's consciousness via 'The Green Death' (Serial "TTT"), but it was 'Planet of the Spiders' which so aptly demonstrated its implications. Indeed, the two stories fit together so neatly, the actions in one influencing those in the other, it is hard to believe that they were not preconceived with this notion of Karma - cause and effect. Had the Doctor not stolen that particular blue crystal in 'The Green Death', he would not have been forced to return it in 'Planet of the Spiders' and, in so doing, destroy himself.

The whole story is, in fact, a particularly skilful allegory of Buddhism and, indeed, Barry Letts comments: "Things we weren't even particularly aware of seemed to fit anyway. Over and over again we'd say 'Oh, but of course. It fits.' We kept seeing that it fitted, which was lovely."

To gain a full understanding and appreciation of 'Planet of the Spiders' (and also, incidentally, a number of other 'Doctor Who' stories) it is thus necessary to know a little about Buddhism itself.

Born in North India in the 6th Century BC, Prince Siddartha Gautama was the son of Suddhodana, ruler of the kingdom of the Sakya, in what is now modern Nepal. Married at 16, he had everything - a beautiful wife, a son, a palace, power and every luxury he could want. But it was a sheltered existence and when he was confronted with the harsh realities of life - suffering, sickness, old age and death - he determined to discover the release from this universal suffering. When he was 29, he left his family and kingdom and led the life of a wandering ascetic for six years, studying and following different religious forms and methods, but this yielded no satisfactory answer. Deciding to abandon all the traditional religious systems, he looked within himself for the answer. Seated under a tree on the bank of the river Neranjara (near Gaya, in modern Bihar, India), he attained Enlightenment - he achieved freedom from birth, decay and death and became the Buddha - the Fully Awakened One. For the next 45 years, until he passed away at 80, he taught the way to Freedom for all classes of people, with no distinction between them - to anybody who would understand and follow it.

In Buddhism, compassion and wisdom are inextricably linked - probably more so than in any other world religion or philosophy. And among all these religions, the Buddha was the only teacher who claimed to be nothing more than a human being, whereas others were God, or incarnations thereof, or inspired by him. The Buddha claimed no divine inspiration - the potential for becoming a Buddha is within each and everybody - if they want it. All religions believe in a Supreme Force, but Buddhism is virtually alone in not personifying it. According to Buddha, man is his own master and there is no higher power presiding over his destiny.



Buddhism is all about knowing and seeing, rather than believing. The teachings invite you to 'come and see' but not to come and believe - you are invited to see, know and understand.

The Buddha proclaims three things: see for yourself; check again and again for yourself; and, if it fits, do it for yourself. This kind of freedom of thought is necessary because, as the Buddha saw it, man's emancipation depends on his own realisation of Truth. The only faith needed is that the Buddha was somebody who attained Enlightenment and who pointed the way from what he was to the Enlightenment he attained. No more faith than that which you place in a guide who says he will show you how to get to such-and-such a place. One has to have faith that the place exists, that the guide knows how to get there and that if he has found it, so can we.

The freedom of thought, compassion and tolerance for <u>all</u> other forms of life shown by Buddhism is possibly unique. There has never been any persecution or the shedding of a drop of blood to convert people to its ideals. It has spread peacefully and now has more than 500 million adherents, following three main forms of Buddhism: Theravada, regarded as the original, orthodox Buddhism; Mahayana, which was developed later; and, finally, Zen, the more direct approach to Enlightenment. Each has its own branches and there are certain differences between all concerning beliefs, observances and practices, but they are in complete agreement on Buddha's most important teachings. The Vajrayana way, trodden by Cho-je et al, is a branch of the Mahayana, commonly called 'Lamaism'. It has a strong Tantric overtone and was founded by the Guru Rimpoche Padma Sambhava in Tibet in the 8th Century AD.

The reason for the different forms? Basically, because each person has his or her own way of reaching Enlightenment.

The Buddhist way of life entails moderation in all things, compassion and respect for all beings, even the lowest form of life, and, above all, tolerance, which is one of the Doctor's underlying character traits. But is it a religion or a philosophy? The fact is, it doesn't matter. Whatever you call it, it stays what it is. Even calling it 'Buddhism' is unnecessary because Truth needs no label and does not belong to any one person. The Truth being talked about here is the same realisation of Truth and Ultimate Reality - the Perennial Philosophy, as described by Aldous Huxley - which underlies all the world's great religions and transcends their sectarian labels which otherwise are the cause of great suffering.

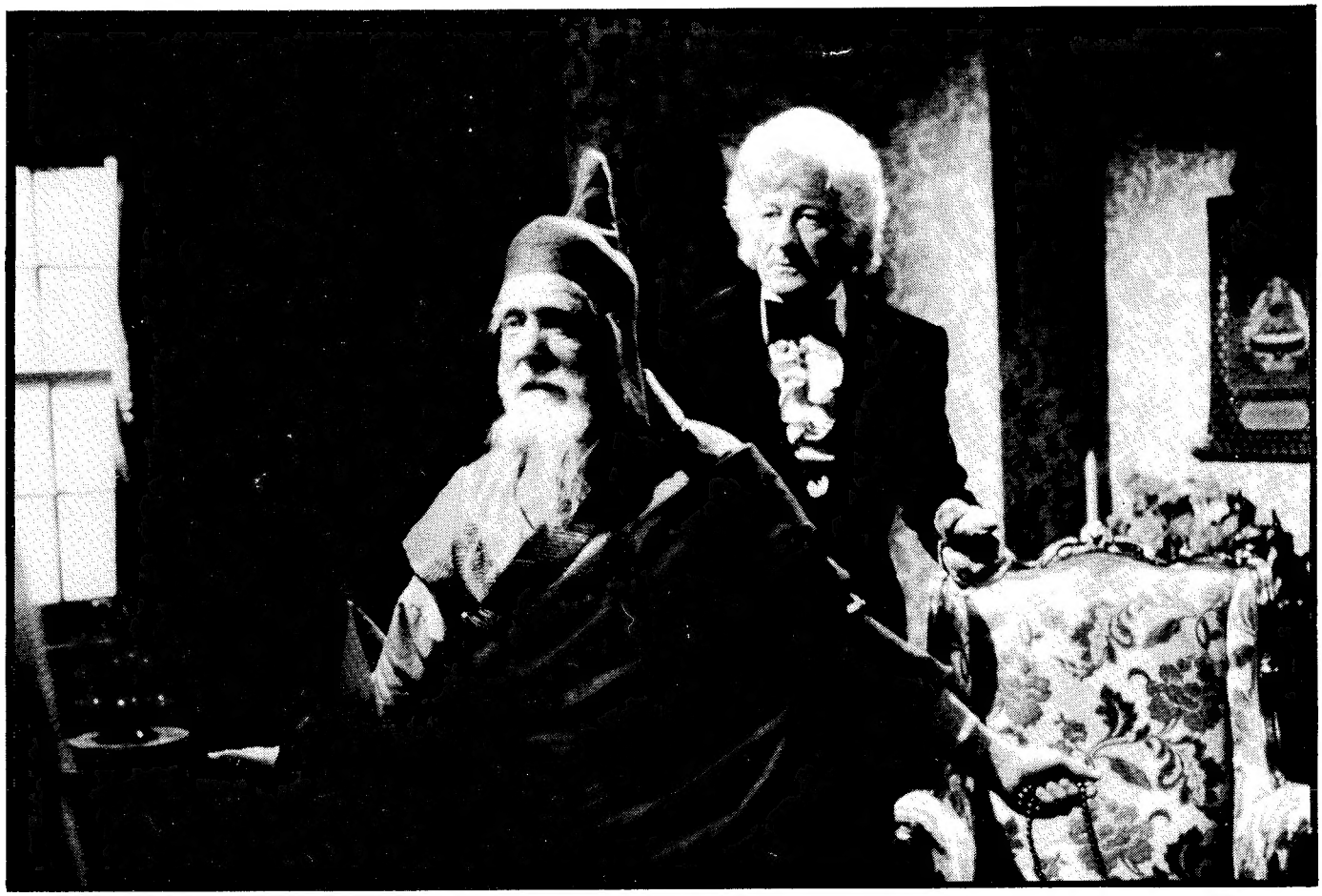
"I come to teach one thing, Dukkha, and the cessation of Dukkha" - these words of the Buddha form the prime source from which Buddhism is derived. And at the heart of the teaching lie the Four Noble Truths:

1) That which makes up a man produces a capacity for and constitutes DUKKHA;

2) The cause of DUKKHA is craving, through ignorance, for individual life and all selfish ends;

3) Letting go of craving does away with DUKKHA;

4) The Way leading to the cessation of DUKKHA is an Eightfold path, otherwise known as The Middle Way (since it avoids all extremes).



'Oukkha' is a Pali word which stands for every conceivable kind of suffering - everything from physical/mental agony to boredom, irritation, frustration. In short the unsatisfactoriness of life.

The factors of the Eightfold Path need to be practised together at all times, not in any order, and they are: Right Understanding (that the cause of dukkha and evil is craving for a separate ego-centred existence, whose natural consequence is that there is no deliverance from it other than getting rid of this craving and the obsession with "I", "me", "mine"); Right Thought; Right Speech; Right Action; Right Means of Livelihood; Right Effort; Right Awareness or Mindfulness; and Right Concentration.

It should be noted that 'Right' in these circumstances should be understood as 'unclouded', 'lucid', 'clear'. It should also be noted that these teachings are guidelines, suggestions, and not commandments (unlike other religions). There is no dogma in Buddhism, just as there is no sin - only ignorance.

In Buddhism, everything is inseparable from change. The whole of Life is a perpetual flux. Everything is impermanent. The Universe periodically manifests itself and then rolls back into the 'Unborn, Unoriginated, Unformed' from which everything comes. In the illusion of time, this continual process takes millions of years. Everything is born, grows, decays and dies. Whether you are a mountain or a silkworm, the end is inevitable. Interestingly, it is only recently that scientists have begun to accept the 'Big Bang Theory' and the concept of an alternately expanding and collapsing Universe - ideas which have been around for over 2,000 years in Buddhist philosophy.

"Foregoing self, the Universe grows I" wrote Edwin Arnold in 'The Light of Asia'. According to Buddhism, the ego has to die because it is an illusion causing suffering.

"We can but point a finger along the Way. A man must go inside and face his fears and hopes, his hates and loves and watch them wither away. Then he will find his true self, which is No-self; he will see his true mind, which is No-mind... The old man must die and the new man will discover to his inexpressible joy that he has never existed," says Cho-je, and this would seem to hold the key to the whole Buddhist analogy of 'Planet of the Spiders'.

Says Barry Letts: "The spiders represent the aspects of the ego - the false self which one identifies with, which includes all the greed and aversion, which causes us the suffering in Buddhist terms. So the individual spiders latch on to people like that, so to speak exteriorising this ego which controls us normally, symbolising that.

"Now, when you get to the end of the story, the Doctor is going right inside the Blue Mountain. That symbolises him going right inside himself, even though he knows it will destroy him; just as somebody going right to the end of Zen is willing to allow himself to be destroyed, the false Ego being destroyed to find the real Self. The Doctor knows he will be destroyed but also knows he will be regenerated.

"But what he's going to find is the Great Spider - the sort of core of Egoism, the central motivator of our lives that wants to be in control of the world, as indeed the Great Spider wanted to be. The way it wants to do it is to increase the power of thinking Mind, as opposed to experiencing Mind.

"In other words, the Mind is trying to become the Buddha, is trying to become the Uncreated, the Unborn, the Whole, which is impossible and if anyone tries it, ultimately they're going to destroy themselves. So the Doctor goes in, confronts this and sees that it is an impossibility, in fact warns the Great Spider in scientific terms it is impossible...and it haopens. The Ego is completely destroyed, the Doctor is destroyed, the old man is destroyed and the new man is regenerated. It was all quite a deliberate parallel."

In the script for episode six, the Doctor, when in conversation with K'anpo and Sarah, should have talked about his "greed for knowledge, experience". When it came to the take, Jon Pertwee substituted "information" for "experience". Although Terrance Dicks and Barry Letts agreed it was wrong, there was no time for a retake but, as Barry Letts says, that made the Doctor a lesser man because to have a greed for experience is a far bigger thing than to have a greed for information.

Letts comments that right the way through there were other Buddhist aspects - some obvious, others not so.

The way to Nirvana is through Enlightenment and the obstacle to Enlightenment and liberation is ignorance,

which explains why the Doctor's greed for experience means he is only semi-enlightened. The Doctor, like the Buddha, cut off all family ties to wander. Curiosity and delight in exploring are encouraged in Buddhism and so although the Doctor isn't wrong to travel the Universe for his goal, it is his craving for experience which is wrong - he is the cause of his own suffering, as we all are. But the experience is necessary to help him along the Path.

Just as Siddartha rejected his life of luxury, so the Doctor rejected the trappings of Gallifrey, and just as the former set out on a great voyage, so did the latter. Non-attachment to places as a base is important for Buddhists, neatly mirroring the Doctor's wanderings and loathing to put down any roots.

However, not everyone views Enlightenment in the same way - some see it as a means to power, thereby increasing the ego rather than destroying it (which is the point of Enlightenment). To this end, Lupton corrupts the others in the meditation centre who have gone there only for peace of mind. He misuses the powers he has gained through meditation, instead of using them to help transform his sangsaric surroundings (world of change) into Nirvana.

The importance of having a teacher for guidance is aptly demonstrated in the chilling scene where Sarah, dominated by the Queen Spider, is exorcised. To the Doctor and the viewer, Sarah seems quite normal at first, but through the enlightened K'anpo's eyes, we see Reality, showing that training is necessary for us to see everything as it truly is.

Talking of another of the 'happy coincidences', Letts says: "Going back to 'The Green Death', the blue crystal was a mind amplifier, so that's why we picked it up in this. The blue crystals, in general, represent the mind; this particular blue crystal just happened to be the one that completed the network the Great One was trying to build. It didn't so much symbolise the Good/Bad conflict of the power of the Mind, as symbolise the attempt of the Ego to build the Mind into something which was total - total personality and total Universe - rather than seeing the Mind as the tool of the real person, or the real Self. It merely happened to fit in so we picked it up and enlarged on it. Maybe it was there subconsciously; one doesn't know these things."

Although there were these happy coincidences, there were also instances where plot twists were deliberately included.

Tommy finds his own liberation via the power of the crystal. But note his earlier delight at the flower in episode one - a delight which he fruitlessly tries to get others to share. On the surface this is just a throwaway scene to highlight Tommy's backward mental state. In fact, as Letts confirms, it was a restatement of the Doctor's 'daisy' speech in 'The Time Monster' (Serial "OOO"). Just as the Doctor had gained an insight into Life through the daisy, so Tommy, in his life of Zen simplicity, sees something in the flower which others don't. "Tommy is living in the present and that's why he can see the flower in the same way as in 'The Time Monster'", says Letts.

Another flower, the lotus, figures largely in Buddhism. It is a symbol of divinity and represents the purification of the mind after shedding the 'dross' or 'muddy water' of its contents during the course of meditation, springing clear and white from the waters. It also features in the sacred 'jewel in the lotus' mantra, 'Om Mani Padme Hum' (padma = lotus), which caused a furore when included in the show.

"Somebody wrote saying how dare we. They said it was a sort of blasphemy to use it as an evil spell, and I wrote back saying 'But this is precisely the point - that evil people use the power you can get from meditation, and so on, for evil purposes'.

"It was quite deliberate that Lupton was using for evil purposes the mantra that had been given to them to raise their spiritual powers. It was very precise. It was intended. It wasn't a slip-up and it certainly wasn't blasphemy," says Letts, who also reveals that Brian Hayles, in his script for 'The Curse of Peladon' (Serial "MMM") originally had the Doctor chanting 'Om Mani Padme Hum' to pacify Aggedor and then commenting how curious it was that a Tibetan Buddhist chant should have calmed the beast down. This was altered as Letts felt it didn't really make sense.

But by far the best instance of serendipity was the fact that the Doctor regenerated at the end of the story, the Buddhist theory of karma and rebirth fitting ever so neatly in with the idea of the succession of the Doctor's lives.

"We definitely thought this is a very nice allegory for reincarnation," says Letts. The Doctor, in meeting the Great One - the emphasis, Letts agrees, should be on the word 'One' - is, in fact, meeting himself.

Letts continues: "He has seen clearly what he has been doing in the past and knows what he must do, and accepts the possibility of his death. To somebody in meditation who faces the Void, he is accepting annihilation of himself, the Self that he has identified with from the beginning of his memory, and so he is accepting death on the off-chance that the Buddha's patriarchs were not lying and that there is something there besides Death. When the Doctor goes in, he is willing to accept the death because he knows that that is what he must do. Partly because, so to speak, in reparation, as a consequence, of the karma of having stolen the blue crystal in the first place."

The consequence is rebirth. It is not full Enlightenment - just a step on the path. Rebirth is a fundamental part of Buddhism, the karma of one life influencing your next until you reach Enlightenment. There is no allocation of the number of rebirths you have - it is up to you and your actions. However, it must be remembered that Nirvana is beyond cause and effect and is not the result of anything. Just as you may get to a mountain via a path, this does not mean the mountain is a result of the path.

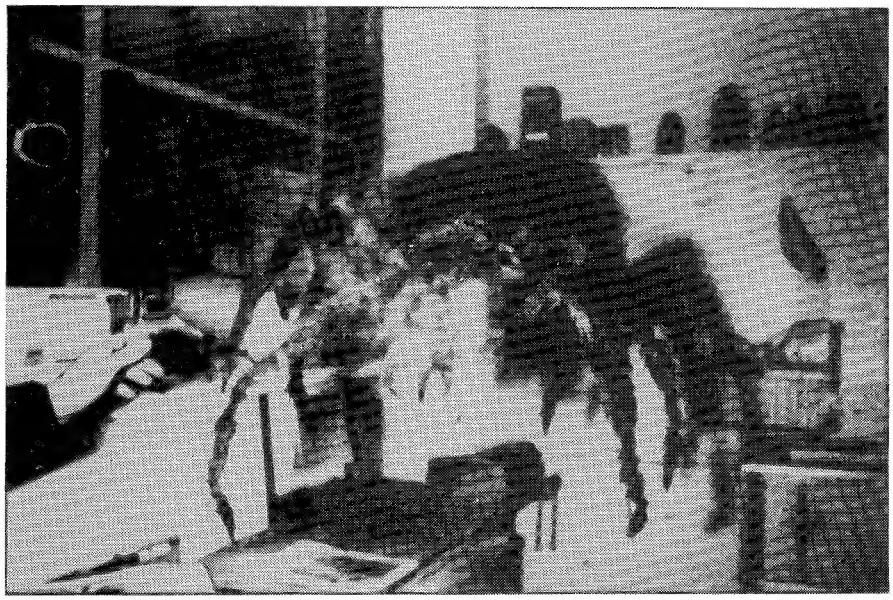
Words are an inadequate vehicle by which to convey such a profound philosophy. As Cho-je pointed out: "The Dharma that can be spoken is not the true Dharma", but what the Buddha was teaching was that if we want to be released from this sangsaric state of suffering, we have to look within ourselves.

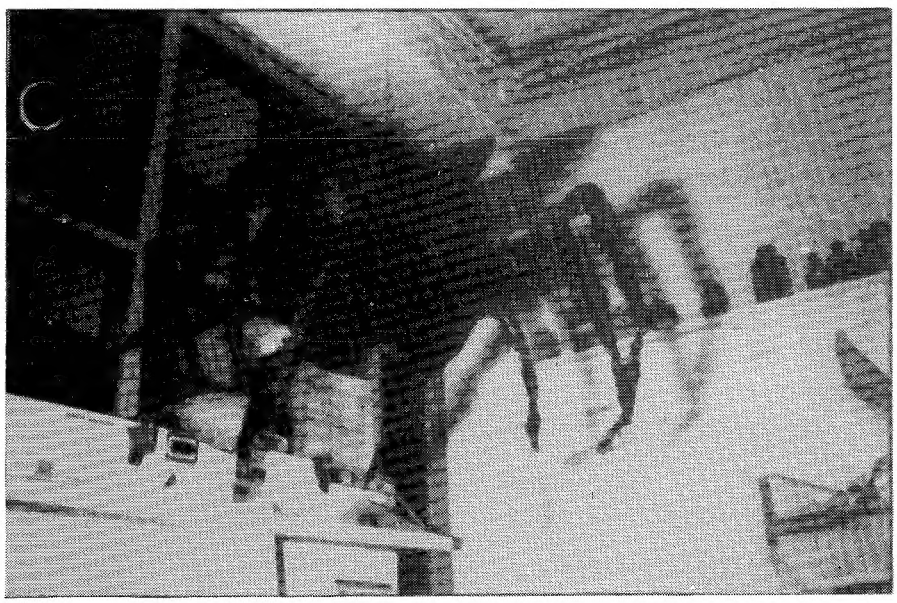
The Buddha also said: "Don't listen to me. I won't tell you what the answers are. All I can say is 'Follow this path and find out for yourself. See what's there.'"

The joy of Buddhism is that in discovering it for yourself, you discover yourself, but, to quote the Buddha's last words, it is up to us to work out our own salvation with diligence.

BEHIND THE SCENES

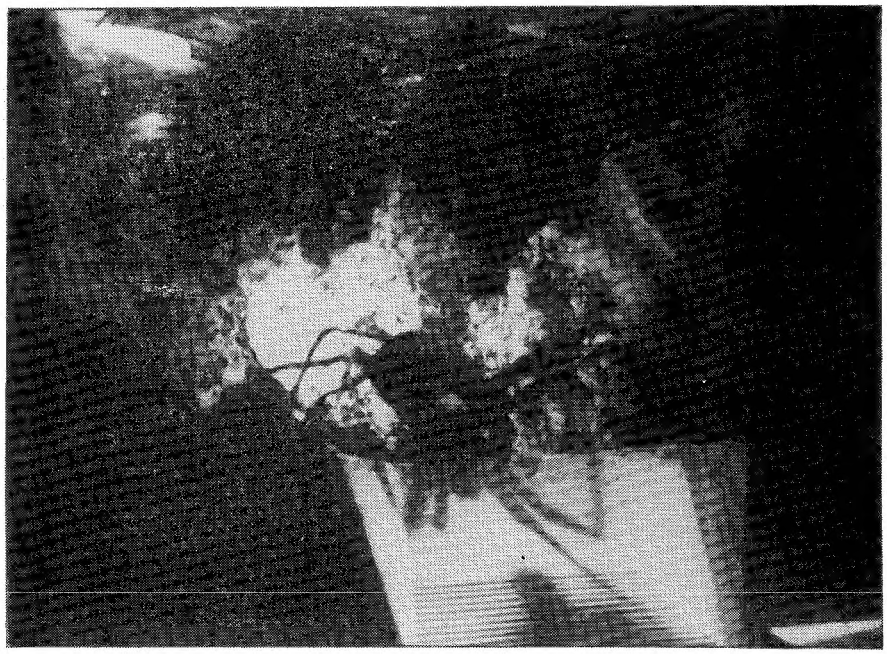
This sequence of stills shows Ian Scoones completing work on the original model of the 'Great One'.





This model was rejected by Barry Letts because he thought it too horrific.

RIGHT: The Great One as it eventually appeared in the story.



LEFT: A model set of the Metebelis Three landscape.

RIGHT: Ian Scoones operates one of the Spider models from below the Council platform set.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Jeremy Bentham

A great deal of the available budget for 'Planet of the Spiders' was spent on the location filming, but this was no accident - it had been deliberately planned, well in advance, to fulfil Barry Letts' wish that the third Doctor should depart the series as spectacularly as he had arrived.

The filming unit's first port of call was Newnham-on-Severn near the Welsh Border, where the manufacturers of the one-man hovercrafts that featured in the story were based. Operating on a tight, two-day schedule, the cast and crew wasted no time shooting the river chase scenes, cutting rehearsals to an absolute minimum - including the time allowed for Jon Pertwee to get acquainted with the controls of the hovercraft (a vehicle which he had wanted to use in the series ever since seeing one on display at the Boat Show). At one point, Pertwee's unfamiliarity with the machine resulted in him shooting off into the distance, out of control - scattering film crew and cameras as he went! But as the story goes, rehearsals were lengthened slightly once Pertwee had persuaded Barry Letts himself to have a go in the machine...

Returning south, the unit next visited Mortimer, near Reading. Here the car chase sequences were filmed, the location having been chosen because of its proximity to both an airfield and the firm of autogyro builders who had provided one of their machines for use in the filming (and who, incidentally, had also supplied James Bond with 'Little Nellie' in the film 'You Only Live Twice').

Both location shoots relied heavily on the use of rig-mounted, locked-focus cameras. Special mountings fixed these small cameras onto the sides of cars etc, the focus then being pre-set by the cameraman before filming commenced. The advantage which this system offered was that the cameraman did not have to risk life and limb clinging onto the car while obtaining an exciting action shot. The disadvantage was that the camera could not move and so always filmed from the same angle. Thus to enliven any scenes done in this way, the rig had to be disassembled, remounted on another part of the vehicle and the scene shot again, hopefully without any light changes, continuity differences etc.

VT recording began in Studio TC1 on April 2nd 1974. A strong advocate of out-of-order shooting, Barry Letts structured his three studio blocks so that, as far as possible, all the scenes featuring one major group of sets were completed in a single session, so avoiding the need for those sets to be re-assembled later on. Thus his first two days of recording saw all the UNIT HQ scenes 'in the can'; block two (April 18th) concentrated on the monastery sets; and block three (April 30th/May 1st), the most technically complicated, shot the majority of the Metebelis material.

Letts made a small amendment to the script of episode one, renaming UNIT's Medical Officer from Dr Sweetman to Dr Sullivan. This was to tie in with the following serial, plans for which were already well advanced. For the flashback sequence, as Clegg practises psychometry on the Doctor's sonic screwdriver, Letts compiled a montage of shots from his previous 'Doctor Who' directing assignment, 'Carnival of Monsters' (Serial "PPP") carefully using only model sequences or shots of Jon Pertwee to avoid incurring residual payments to other artistes.

To give the serial more visual impact, Letts adopted a style whereby after recording a scene he would often go back and shoot several extra reaction or insert shots which could be added in during the editing sessions. In episode one, for example, the scene where Mike Yates steals into the cellar to spy on the meditators was embellished with several separately-recorded close-ups of cymbals clashing together and candles flickering.

Letts chose a different approach from that adopted by Michael Briant in 'The Green Death' (Serial "TTT") to show the mind-clearing effect of the blue crystal. In this instance, the camera trained on the crystal was fitted with a Front Axial Projection system and a star filter; on cue, the FAP box would emit a pulsing light, and the filter would cause the image reflecting back into the camera to sparkle.

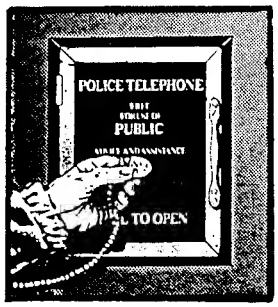
The spider props created by the Effects Department were varied in their design, depending on what each was required to do. The simplest versions, the Counsel Spiders, were made of wood and vacuum-formed plastic, with wire-armatured latex rubber legs. Slightly more detailed was the static 'hanging spider' which needed to be rigid enough to cling realistically to its host's back. The 'jumping spider' was a wire-supported puppet, while the Queen had a hole in its base so that an operator concealed below could work the limbs like a glove puppet. The 'Great One' was another wire puppet, sitting in its own miniature set. Most complex of all, though, was the mechanical 'Boris' spider, created and built by Mat Irvine. Fitted with batteries, a set of Meccano gears, a motor and a chain drive, 'Boris' could actually scuttle unaided along the floor once the motor was switched on.

The 'Whomobile' made its only appearance in the TV studio on April 3rd, so that it could be matted against a CSO sky background for the scene where it is 'in flight' chasing Lupton in the autogyro.

CSO was also used very extensively for the Metebelis Three scenes. Although a small set was built in the studio showing the exterior of a couple of huts, the bulk of the village was a model stage, carefully matted into the picture via the Inlay Desk. Using mixed-feed CSO, Telejector slides of the Arizona desert were inserted to provide the skyline and the mountains in the distance. The same process was to have been used for the exteriors of Spider City, particularly for the scenes in episodes five and six where the Doctor, and later the villagers, tackle the palace gate guards. However, due to the small size of the city model, the finished composite looked very unconvincing, so Letts opted to scrap the scenes entirely, substituting extra padding in the form of an extended fight scene with the guards inside the palace.

This change of plan contributed to a further problem, which became apparent only during editing. Episode four, it transpired, under-ran, and so had to be extended past its original cliffhanger of Lupton saying, "What are you waiting for? Kill him!" That, in turn, led to episode five drastically under-running (its original ending being Barnes and company attacking the Doctor and Sarah as they emerge from the TARDIS), and this could only be remedied by hefty borrowing of footage from episode six. Episode six itself then had to be re-edited, and its formal reprise ended up featuring new material not included with episode five.

A simple rollback-and-mix, with a glowing light superimposition, accomplished the effect of the Doctor regenerating into his fourth body. Ironically, as all the UNIT scenes were recorded in one go, the regeneration went 'into the can' in the earliest recording block. The only day when Jon Pertwee and his successor were in the studio together was 2nd April 1974.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

Stephen James Walker

SERIAL "ZZZ" — COLOUR

PART 1	Duration 24' 40"	4th. May 1974
PART 2	Duration 25' 02"	11th. May 1974
PART 3	Duration 24' 58"	18th. May 1974
PART 4	Duration 23' 53"	25th. May 1974
PART 5	Duration 24' 01"	1st. June 1974
PART 6	Duration 24' 43"	8th. June 1974

CAST

STARRING:

Doctor Who.....Jon Pertwee
Sarah Jane Smith.....Elisabeth Sladen

FEATURING:

Mike Yates.....Richard Franklin
Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart.....Nicholas Courtney
Lupton.....John Dearth
Cho-je.....Kevin Lindsay
Tommy.....John Kane
Professor Herbert Clegg.....Cyril Shaps
Sergeant Benton.....John Levene
K'anpo Rimpoche.....George Cormack
Sabor.....Geoffrey Morris
Arak.....Gareth Hunt

WITH:

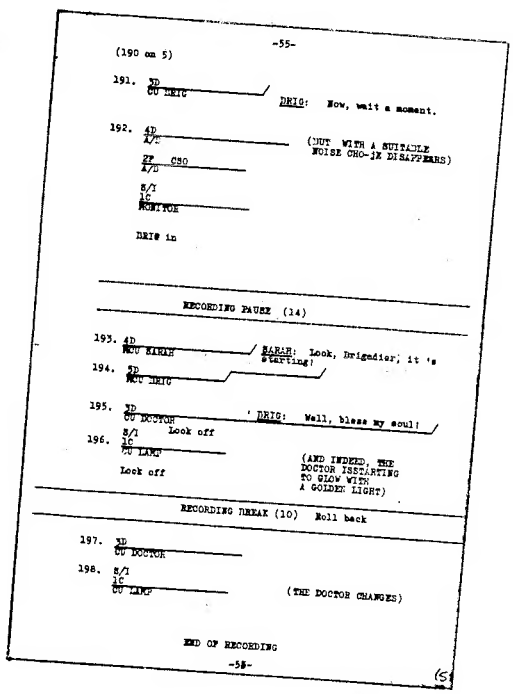
Barnes.....Christopher Burgess
Land.....Carl Forgione
Moss.....Terence Lodge
Keaver.....Andrew Staines
Soldier.....Pat Gorman
Policeman.....Chubby Oates
Bert (Man with Boat).....Terry Walsh
Hopkins.....Michael Pinder
Tramp.....Stuart Fell
Spider Voices.....Ysanne Churchman
Kismet Delgado, Maureen Morris
Tuar.....Ralph Arliss
Rega.....Joanna Munro
Neska.....Jenny Laird
Guard Captains.....Walter Randall
Max Faulkner
Double for Doctor Who.....Terry Walsh
Villagers.....Barbara Bermel, Sue Ann Manners
Margaret McKechnie, Lorna Kilner
Ann Plenty, Mary Rennie
Pat Gorman, Ian Elliot
Simon Christy, Ken Tracey
Keith Ashley, Bill Matthews
Guards.....Steve Ismay, Dennis Plenty
Roy Pearce, Derek Hunt
Lesley Bates, Harry Fielder
John Cash, Geoff Witherick
Studio Extras.....Roger Salter, Geoffrey Brighty
Julian Hudson, Patsy White
Jack Baker, Pat Travis
Freddie White, Sarah Jane Steer
Leslie Glenroy, David Nicholl
Tony Kilbane, Elaine Banham
Stuntmen.....Terry Walsh, Stuart Fell
Alan Chuntz, Billy Horrigan

AND INTRODUCING:

Doctor Who.....Tom Baker

TECHNICAL CREDITS

Production Assistant.....Marion McDougall
Assistant Floor Manager.....Graeme Harper
Director's Assistant.....Heather Dunthorne
Production Unit Manager.....George Gallaccio
Technical Manager 1.....Ralph Walton
Technical Manager 2.....Tommy Dawson
Sound Supervisor.....John Holmes
Grams Operator.....Andrew Hunter
Crew.....No. 12
Vision Mixer.....Nick Lake
Floor Assistant.....Geoffrey Posner
Film Cameraman.....Fred Hamilton
Film Sound.....John Gatland
Film Editor.....Bob Rymer
Inlay Operator.....Dave Chapman
Visual Effects.....Bernard Wilkie
Visual Effects Assistants.....Ian Scoones
Richard Conway, Steve Bowman
Mat Irvine
Puppeteer.....Barry Smith
Stunt Co-ordinator.....Terry Walsh
Costumes.....L. Rowland Warne
Make-up.....Deanne Turner
Incidental Music.....Dudley Simpson
Special Sound.....Dick Mills
Script Editor.....Terrance Dicks
Designer.....Rochelle Selwyn
Producer.....Barry Letts
Director.....Barry Letts



-55-

(190 on 5)

191. XD CU DEIG — DEIG: Now, wait a moment.

192. 4D A/C — (OUT WITH A SUITABLY NOISE CHO-JE DISAPPEARS)
ZF CSO
A/D
5/T
1C
MONITOR
DEIG in

RECORDING PAUSE (14)

193. 4D MCU SARAH — SARAH: Look, Brigadier, it's starting!
194. 5D MCU DEIG

195. XD CU DOCTOR — DEIG: Well, bless my soul!
196. 5/T 1C CU LAND — Look off
Look off
(AND INDEED, THE DOCTOR IRRIANTING TO GLOW WITH A GOLDEN LIGHT)

RECORDING BREAK (10) Roll back

197. XD CU DOCTOR
198. 5/T 1C CU LAND — (THE DOCTOR CHANGES)

END OF RECORDING

-58-

(5)